

Glossary

Agreed Order: A legal document, issued by Ecology, which formalizes an agreement between Ecology and the potentially liable persons for the actions needed at a site. An Agreed Order may be used for all remedial actions except for non-routine cleanup actions and interim actions that constitute a substantial majority of a cleanup action likely to be selected. Since an Agreed Order is not a settlement, it shall not provide for mixed funding, a covenant not to sue, or protection from claims for contribution. An agreed order means that the potentially liable person agrees to perform remedial actions at the site in accordance with the provisions of the agreed order, and that Ecology will not take additional enforcement action against the potentially liable person to require those remedial actions specified in the agreed order, so long as the potentially liable person complies with the provisions of the order. Agreed orders are subject to public comment. If an order substantially changes, an additional public comment period is provided.

Built Environment: The elements of the environment that are generally built or made by people as contrasted with natural processes, including roads, utilities, buildings and bridges.

Cleanup: The implementation of a cleanup action or interim action.

Cleanup Action: Any remedial action, except interim actions, taken at a site to eliminate, render less toxic, stabilize, contain, immobilize, isolate, treat, destroy, or remove a hazardous substance that complies with cleanup levels; utilizes permanent solutions to the maximum extent practicable; and includes adequate monitoring to ensure the effectiveness of the cleanup action.

Cleanup Action Plan: A document that selects the cleanup action and specifies cleanup standards and other requirements for a particular site. The cleanup action plan, which follows the remedial investigation/feasibility study report, is subject to a public comment period. After completion of a comment period on the draft cleanup action plan, Ecology issues a final cleanup action plan.

Cleanup Level: The concentration of a hazardous substance in soil, water, air, or sediment that is determined to be protective of human health and the environment under specified exposure conditions.

Cleanup Process: The process for identifying, investigating, and cleaning up hazardous waste sites.

Consent Decree: A legal document, approved and issued by a court, which formalizes an agreement reached between Ecology and potentially liable persons on the actions needed at a site. A consent decree is subject to public comment, and a public meeting is required. If a consent decree substantially changes, an additional comment period is provided. After satisfying the

public comment and meeting requirements, Ecology files the consent decree with the appropriate superior court or federal court having jurisdiction over the matter.

Containment: A container, vessel, barrier, or structure, whether natural or constructed, which confines a hazardous substance within a defined boundary and prevents or minimizes its release into the environment.

Contaminant: Any hazardous substance that does not occur naturally or occurs at greater than natural background levels.

Dissolved-Phase Contaminants: Chemicals that are constituents of LNAPL and have dissolved into groundwater over time (see also LNAPL).

Exposure Pathway: The path a hazardous substance takes or could take from a source to an exposed organism. An exposure pathway describes the mechanism by which an individual or population is exposed or has the potential to be exposed to hazardous substances at or originating from a site.

Feasibility Study (FS): Provides identification and analysis of site cleanup alternatives and is usually completed within a year. The entire Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study process takes about two years and is followed by the cleanup action plan. Remedial action evaluating sufficient site information to enable the selection of a cleanup action plan.

Free Product: A hazardous substance that is present as a nonaqueous phase liquid (that is, liquid not dissolved in water). Free product flows and accumulates as a liquid separate from water in wells.

Groundwater: Water found beneath the earth's surface that fills pores between materials such as sand, soil, or gravel. In aquifers, groundwater occurs in sufficient quantities that it can be used for drinking water, irrigation, and other purposes.

Hazardous Site List: A list of ranked sites that require further remedial action. These sites are published in the Site Register.

Interim Action: Any remedial action that partially addresses the cleanup of a site. It is an action that is technically necessary to reduce a threat to human health or the environment by eliminating or substantially reducing one or more pathways for exposure to a hazardous substance at a facility; an action that corrects a problem that may become substantially worse or cost substantially more to address if the action is delayed; an action needed to provide for completion of a site hazard assessment, state remedial investigation/feasibility study, or design of a cleanup action.

Light Non-Aqueous Phase Liquid (LNAPL): Liquid that floats on groundwater and accumulates on top of water in wells, groundwater or surface water is called mobile (free-phase) LNAPL. See also residual LNAPL.

Model Toxics Control Act (MTCA): Refers to RCW 70.105D. Voters approved it in November 1988. The implementing regulation is WAC 173-340 and was amended in 2001.

Monitoring Wells: Special wells drilled at specific locations on or off a hazardous waste site where groundwater can be sampled at selected depths and studied to determine the direction of groundwater flow and the types and amounts of contaminants present.

Natural Environment: The elements of the environment frequently referred to as natural elements, or resources, such as earth, air, water and wildlife.

Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH): A class of organic compounds, common in some petroleum products, some of which are long lasting and carcinogenic. These compounds are formed from the combustion of organic material and are ubiquitous in the environment.

Public Notice: At a minimum, adequate notice mailed to all persons who have made a timely request of Ecology and to persons residing in the potentially affected vicinity of the proposed action; mailed to appropriate news media; published in the local (city or county) newspaper of largest circulation; and the opportunity for interested persons to comment.

Public Participation Plan: A plan prepared under the authority of WAC 173-340-600 to encourage coordinated and effective public involvement tailored to the public's needs at a particular site.

Recovery Wells: Special wells drilled at specific locations on or off a hazardous waste site where petroleum products can be recovered from the groundwater and recycled or disposed in accordance with state law and regulations.

Redd: A depression created in gravel beds by the upstroke of the female salmon's body and tail, used by spawning salmon to create "nests" for their eggs.

Release: Any intentional or unintentional entry of any hazardous substance into the environment.

Remedial Action: Any action to identify, eliminate, or minimize any threat posed by hazardous substances to human health or the environment, including any investigative and monitoring activities of any release or threatened release

of a hazardous substance, and any health assessments or health effects studies conducted in order to determine the risk or potential risk to human health.

Remedial Investigation (RI): Any remedial action, which provides information on the extent and magnitude of contamination at a site. This usually takes 12 to 18 months and is followed by the feasibility study. The purpose of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study is to collect and develop sufficient site information enabling the selection of a cleanup action.

Residual LNAPL: The oily residue that is caught up in the soil pores due to capillary pressure following the removal of mobile LNAPL (see LNAPL). Residual LNAPL can provide a continuous source of contamination to groundwater from soluble constituents.

Responsiveness Summary: A compilation of all questions and comments to a document open for public comment and their respective answers/replies by Ecology. The responsiveness summary is mailed, at a minimum, to those who provided comments, and its availability is published in the Site Register.

Risk: The probability that a hazardous substance, when released into the environment, will cause an adverse effect in exposed humans or other living organisms.

Risk Assessment: The determination of the probability that a hazardous substance, when released into the environment, will cause an adverse effect in exposed humans or other living organisms.

Seep: A point on the riverbank where the groundwater has carried the petroleum products, and those products are released into the river.

Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons (TPH): A scientific measure of the sum of all petroleum hydrocarbons in a sample (without distinguishing one hydrocarbon from another). The “petroleum hydrocarbons” include compounds of carbon and hydrogen that are derived from naturally occurring petroleum sources or from manufactured petroleum products (such as refined oil, coal, and asphalt).

Toxicity: The degree to which a substance at a particular concentration is capable of causing harm to living organisms, including people, plants and animals.